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THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

- Founded 1879 -

President: Mr. Hue MacKenzie, 228 Royal Ave., Ottawa
Secretary: Mr. A. W. Rathwell, Can. Wildlife Service

Objects of the Club: To foster an acquaintance with and love of nature and to encourage and publish original research in natural history.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, official journal of the Club, devoted to the publishing of research in natural history. TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a non-technical publication of general interest to local naturalists.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members. See inside back cover.

Membership: Active membership ($5 annual fee) includes subscription to The Canadian Field-Naturalist. An Associate membership ($3 annual fee) is available to local naturalists, entitling them to join in field trips and similar Club activities. All Ottawa Valley members, both Active and Associate, receive TRAIL & LANDSCAPE; other members may receive it on request.

Application for Membership should be addressed to: Miss L.G. Howden, Treasurer, Box 3264 Postal Stn. C, Ottawa 3.

YOU ARE INVITED TO BECOME A MEMBER

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TRAILS & Landscape

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Editor: Mrs. G.R. Hanes
18 Briarcliffe Drive
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Assistant Editors:
Dr. Theodore Mosquin
Mrs. H.A. Thomson

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NATURALISTS NEED GATINEAU PARK
AND THE PARK NEEDS NATURALISTS

We naturalists, hikers, camera and binocular carriers -- we have come to look upon Gatineau Park as our park. Indeed, it is the only place within a short travelling distance of the city where we can find sizable areas of natural woodland, bog and escarpment not in private hands. We have no National or Provincial Park of this character nearby. Gatineau Park is in the public domain, and we are free to enjoy its superb views, observe wildlife, admire wildflowers, wonder at the ways in which animals and plants share the land and live in relation to their environment. The Park is a treasure-house of natural wonders.

But increasingly we have come to have uneasy feelings about Gatineau Park. Do those who administer the area really know what a jewel is in their keeping? There have been incidents that suggest to us a lack of awareness among the park administrators, resulting in some incredible blunders, from a naturalist's viewpoint. For years many of us have used the trail to Carbide Wilson's dam on Meach Brook. A charming woodland trail, bordered by native shrubs and wildflowers? It used to be : last year it was sprayed with brush-killer! Ugly withered remains of plants -- who had ordered their destruction, and for what reason ? Enquiry brought only this reply "The underbrush has to be kept down". Why? No reason was forthcoming, unless we were expected to take seriously the offhand remark that people are afraid a bear might jump out at them!

On the banks of Black Lake, a few years ago, grew a rare climber with delicate purple flowers, Mountain Clematis. Never abundant, it is known from only a few places in our district. Did its three-part leaf suggest Poison Ivy to some zealous person on the Park staff? Although it graced a steep rocky bank where no one would normally walk, it was cut down, with the surrounding shrubs, to leave an ugly scar of sharp stubs and dying leaves. And most Club members have heard about the Mud Lake disaster : the habitat of nine species of orchids was buried under tons of sand and gravel, for no good reason discernible to a naturalist.

The NCC has not planned these operations to outrage naturalists. The plants in the Park are officially protected. Then what philosophy will account for these and other 'improvements'? The attitude toward the Park is apparent when one considers the work done there recently. Gatineau Park is obviously meant to be viewed from a moving vehicle! More miles of smooth roads, the vegetation cleared away to reveal the distant view, tidy grassed (and mowed!) banks with neatly spaced shrubs : the aim apparently is to make Gatineau Park into a king-sized city park, for the benefit of motorists. The motorists, who visit the Park so fleetingly, certainly have a legitimate claim to some of these benefits. Nearly always though, the sheer charm of an intimate woodland trail is completely destroyed by improving things for the jet-set, who rarely use the trails anyway. The time has come for those of us who enjoy and appreciate the animal and plant life of the Park to make our needs and rights known to the Park people.

The guardians of our Park will defend its natural values when they know where the real treasures are. We have had good cooperation when we expressed our view in specific cases; in some, our advice has been too late. Perhaps a naturalist among the policy-makers of the Park would have averted some disasters before they got underway.

We strongly urge the NCC to retain the services of a competent naturalist, and to ask his advice before filling in more Mud Lakes, chopping down rare vines and spraying our favourite walking trails.

a. H.

ANY HARM IN A COWBIRD ? Lois Kingston

My father was A. G. Kingston, an early member of the OFNC, having been treasurer and vice president of the Club at different times; and constantly described in the Field-Naturalist magazine through the early years as 'ornithological leader'. In later years he was a joint-auditor of the Club with Mr. Hoyes Lloyd, our venerable dean of ornithologists today, who corroborates the above statements.

The following excerpts from, and my own synopses of my father's bird notes, dated 1895, constitute one of the few actual field observations I have come upon, which vividly illustrate the damage done by cowbirds.

These observations were carried out and recorded in great detail. My father found on Remoux(?) Island a Yellow Warbler's nest, containing three young warblers, one unhatched egg, and a young cowbird. All were apparently about three days old. Eyes not yet open in either species; primaries of cowbird well showing, the 'sacks' not yet burst.

My father made many visits to the nest, sometimes in late afternoon and sometimes in the early morning. He observed the birds from a basswood 'hide' where he had a good view of the nest, and after removing leaves and twigs he could observe which birds were fed at each visit of the parent. The size of the cowbird at the first visit was almost equal to that of the three warblers taken together.

On the second visit he advanced to the nest, removed the addled egg, and measured the young. The cowbird had grown very much since yesterday and now occupied more than half the upper surface of the nest. ('Sacks' of primary quills bursting into feathers at the tip.) Two of the young warblers had grown larger than the third. This one now cannot reach the top of the nest for food. It is still blind, but the others all have their eyes open. The cowbird, on this second day of observation, stretches its head two inches above the rim of the nest; each of the two larger warblers to about one inch, while the little one did not appear at all.

The visits of the parent birds were counted, and the destination of the food recorded on each trip. The male particularly favours the cowbird and deposits the food nearly always in its maw. During ninety-six minutes of observation-time during this second day, there were 61 feedings by the parents - 34 by the female and 27 by the male - of which the cowbird received 36 portions, while the three young warblers together received only 25.

For the Third Day the notes read, "Going to the nest, I found that one of the young warblers had fallen to the ground, and was sitting at the foot of the little bush, peeping pitfully. Had the cowbird been following the cuckoo's tactics (ousting foster-brothers and sisters from the nest)? Hardly, I think. His habit seems to be rather to keep himself at the top, and hold down his nest-mates from air and food. Probably this youngster, in struggling to get his head free of the cowbird's spreading wings, had overshot the mark... The third warbler had disappeared entirely. It had perhaps died, or been killed by a fall and then carried away by the parents. All the birds have grown much and gained feathers since Saturday and can now use their eyes well."

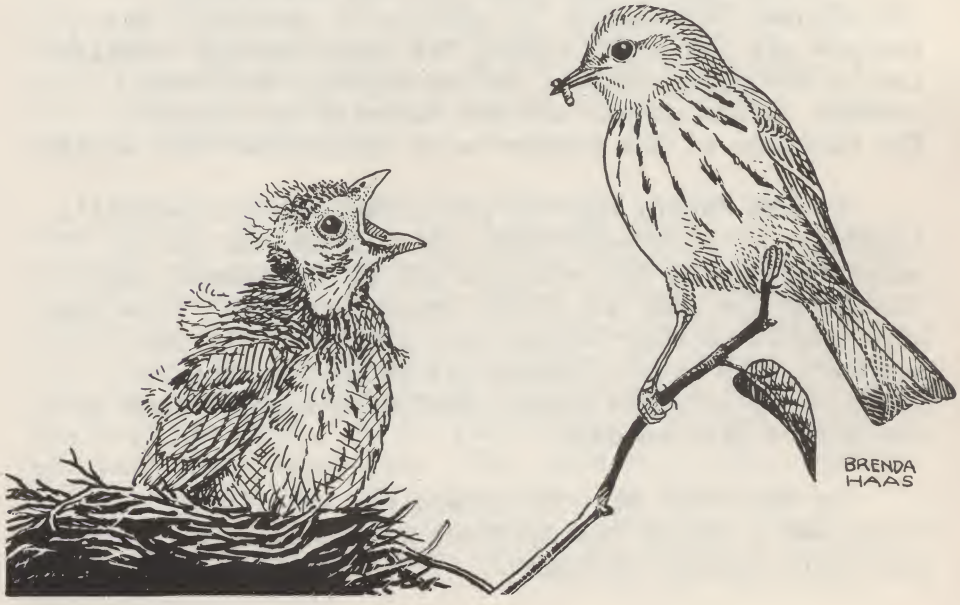
During observation time on this third day, (40 minutes in morning, 30 minutes in evening), the cowbird was fed eight times, the young warbler remaining in the nest, twice. In the evening the young warbler on the ground was fed twice by the female. The feedings of the cowbird were unrecorded this visit.

On the Fourth Day the proportion of the cowbird's feedings, as contrasted with that of the two young warblers, one in the nest and one on the ground, was virtually the same as on the preceding days. "The cowbird now is so much larger than either of the old warblers that when he opens his mouth for food he looks as if he could easily swallow the whole head of the parent bird as well."

On the Fifth Day the island was not visited. There was a severe thunderstorm in the evening, and much rain during the night.

On the Sixth Day my father found the body of the young warbler on the ground, beneath the nest, covered with buzzing flies. Probably a casualty of the thunderstorm, unprotected by the nest -- poor little waif! The notes read "The cowbird was still in the nest, or rather on it, for he more than filled it; and when I pushed him slightly to one side to see if there was anything under him, he answered my question by taking to flight, and disclosing an empty nest. He flew about six feet, and when I put him on the nest again he refused to stay there.

"A careful search for some yards around failed to reveal the missing warbler, either dead or alive. I have never seen either crow, hawk, blue-jay or shrike on the Island." The disappearance continued to be an unsolved mystery, but indicated, no doubt, a fatality.



The Seventh Day, "After some search I found the young cowbird perched about three feet from the ground in a bush about twenty feet from the nest. The old warblers fed him and fretted over my approach, just as ever... Examining the empty nest today, I find that it is not nearly so well fitted together, nor so deeply cupped as many nests of the same species that I have seen; and as it is so near the ground (not above 20 feet) I conclude that the builders are a pair of last year's young, which perhaps will account for their being so easily imposed upon by the cowbird."

The following day, the Eighth, the cowbird had flown away.

I (L.R.K.) would like to know whether the business of rearing a cowbird is always as destructive to foster-brothers and sisters as this one was; and whether other parent birds show a little more sense.

Not to close on too discouraging a note, I know that A.G.K. has sometimes told me (long ago) of finding a warbler or vireo nest which had a second floor built in it. It was thus two-storied and when opened up the offending cowbird's egg was to be found in the lower storey. Mr. Godfrey also cites this phenomenon in his section on the cowbird in The Birds of Canada.

Another hopeful observation is noted by Herbert Friedmann in his fascinating book "The Cowbirds - a Study in the Biology of Social Parasitism". Three photographs of a female Robin are shown. In the first she discovers a cowbird's egg in her nest, beside two eggs of her own. In the second she stands on the rim of her nest and pierces the cowbird's egg, before throwing it out. In the third she sits peacefully incubating her own two eggs unmolested.

A MINGLING OF MAPLES

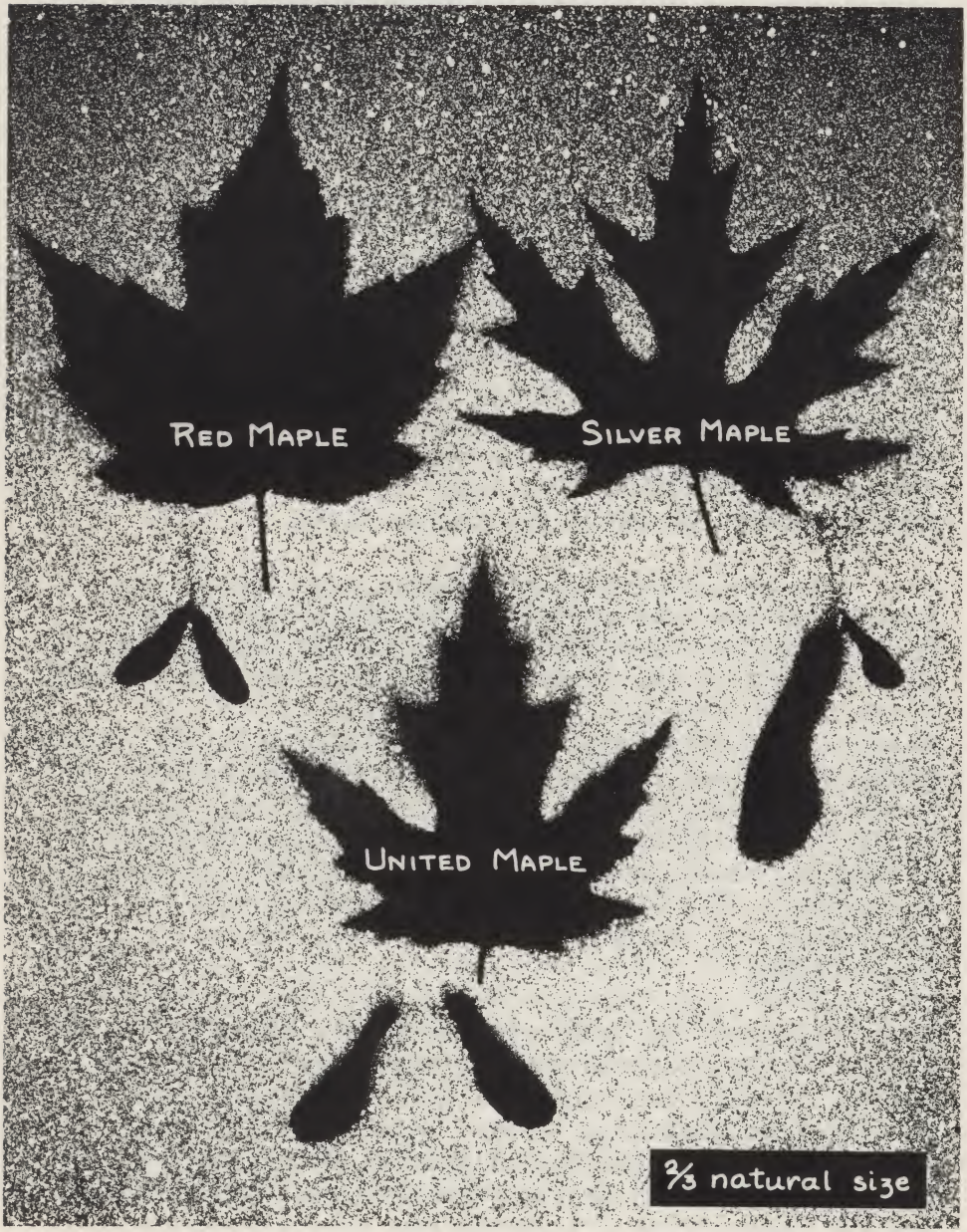
William G. Dore

Every Canadian schoolchild, Boy Scout, and naturalist early learns how to tell our maples by their leaves and 'keys'.

If we confine our comparison to the Red and the Silver Maple (the 'soft maples' of the lumbermen), we know that Red Maple has leaves with the sides of the central lobe rather straight, making a broad V-shaped sinus with the side lobes, greenish beneath. Silver Maple has leaves with converging sides to the central lobe and a deep U-shaped sinus, silvery white beneath. The keys of the Red are much smaller, usually red; those of the Silver large, yellowish or pale brown. Other differences are given in tree books and botanical manuals and concern the structure of the flowers, time of flowering, nature of twigs and buds, cracking of the bark, preferred habitat, etc. These latter differences are less obvious but to the trained eye can be good diagnostic features.

How disconcerting it is to come across a tree which does not exactly fit either species! Its leaves are intermediate in shape between those of the Red and the Silver, and are only slightly silvery beneath. The size of its pink or pale orange keys (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch long) falls just between the small size (about 1 inch) of Red Maple and the large size (about 2 inches) of Silver Maple and its other characters of flowers, buds and bark are also intermediate or mixed up.

Such trees with intermediate or mingled characteristics of Red and Silver Maple are frequently encountered along the main rivers of eastern Canada. The broad flood-plains along the lower Ottawa, for example, have dense woods of soft maples in which many of the trees have this blending of characters which defies classification into one or the other of the traditional types. Back on the hills north of the river, the Red Maple is more uniform in character and occurs there quite true-to-type. But, outside of roadside and property plantings, it is quite difficult to find a 'typical' Silver Maple in nature.


RED MAPLE
SILVER MAPLE
UNITED MAPLE
⅔ natural size

It becomes rather obvious that these intermediate maples represent natural hybrids. Artificial hybrids between Red and Silver Maple have been produced experimentally, so it seems plausible that crossing should also take place between trees in the wild. Studies on hybridization are progressing in the United States but as yet little detailed information is available.

The interesting observation made at Ottawa last summer is that these wild hybrids produce good seeds, plump seeds which germinate readily into sturdy seedlings. The expected sterility usually associated with interspecific hybrids is lacking. The logical way to classify the Red and the Silver Maple, therefore, is to think of them as belonging to one species, as subspecies which freely interbreed but which retain their characteristic identity when kept separate. The intermediates resulting from their genetic union might appropriately be called the United Maple.

The evolution of United Maple might have followed a course such as this : the small-seeded Red Maple spread rapidly northward following the retreat of the glaciers and early established itself as a prominent forest tree over wide and varied terrain in Canada. The northward migration of Silver Maple, however, took place more slowly, due partly to larger seeds and partly because of limited river-course habitats. Advancing trees of Silver Maple, particularly if female, would be quickly overwhelmed by pollen of the prolific Red Maple into whose territory it penetrated. A mixed progeny from these unions would result.

The seeds of these maples, unlike those of the Sugar, Black, Mountain and Striped, ripen early in the season, in mid-June, and must germinate right away, or else lose their viability. Ideal conditions for their germination and establishment are provided on the extensive flood-shores of rivers like the Ottawa, the St. John in New Brunswick, and others in southeastern Canada. The fresh alluvium deposited each year and the prolonged, often violent, inundation by water tend to keep down competing vegetation. Many new seedlings can be seen on the beaches during the

summer, and some of these survive to contribute to the adjacent bottomland forest. In the mature upland forest they would be repressed to extinction, hence their ecological localization.

The specific identity of our emblematic maple has never been stated in the official statutes, - an act of parliamentary oversight? , or wisdom? Could the flag mapleleaf be that of the United Maple of Canada.

Do we detect a special identity in our flora? A tree of mixed parentage, a vigorous and vital breed, newly sprung from the particular milieu which pertains to Canada!

Plant Research Institute
Experimental Farm
Ottawa

The leaves and keys used in the spattergram are from complete specimens preserved in the herbarioum of the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa:

RED MAPLE = Acer rubrum L. Mont Ste Marie, Quebec; rocky summit; 14 June 1966; No. 22001 of Dore & Beales.

SILVER MAPLE = Acer saccharinum L. Ottawa River Parkway near end of Woodroffe Ave., Ottawa, Ontario; probably planted; 9 June 1966; No. 21988 of Dore & Sherk.

UNITED MAPLE = Acer intermediate rubrum and saccharinum Britannia Bay at the end of Scivens Street, Ottawa, Ont; flood-beach woods; 9 June 1966; No. 21991 of Dore & Sherk.

from THE NATIONAL COLLECTION OF NATURE PHOTOGRAPHS

Solitary Sandpiper W D ADDISON Maple Ont.

Horsetail DORTHEA CALVERLEY Dawson Creek B.C.

Red Baneberry H A THOMSON Ottawa Ont.

Grasshopper MILDRED McPHEE Chilliwack B.C.

PLANT CONSERVATION in the OTTAWA GREENBELT AND GATINEAU PARK

E.W. Greenwood

In any area close to a city, land use patterns develop in response to demands for various facilities which include housing, social services such as schools and playgrounds, roads and recreation facilities. Naturally these often lead to the destruction of natural habitats for plants, animals, fish and birds, or their alteration to an extent which changes their natural character completely. To avoid total loss of natural sites, conservation is necessary.

Conservation of plants and plant communities should be regarded as simply another facet of the overall management of natural resources for human use. Members of the OFNC may be interested in the plants and animals and their communities in themselves, but this is a minority view shared by only a very small percentage of the population of any area. Nevertheless, the retention of a considerable number of sites in natural or little-disturbed conditions can be justified as adding to the variety of our surroundings and to the interest of the area to many local inhabitants and visitors.

Ottawa is fortunate in having two controlled areas of countryside nearby, Gatineau Park and the Greenbelt, in which the normal social pressures are severely limited and changes are subject to planning procedures aimed at the preservation of the whole area rather than just small parts of it. This does not mean that there will not be changes, but it does permit consideration of all points of view, including nature conservation, before alterations are approved.

OFNC representatives have established communication with the NCC, and have expressed our interest in conservation and our wish to assist and to work with the NCC to this end. The NCC officers stated that they would like to be informed of any plant colonies which should be protected, so that their existence may be taken into account in planning. Of course, no promise to conserve any given plant grouping can be given, but the NCC wishes to preserve the plants wherever this

can be done, even though people come first. This is a very enlightened policy, and one which our club should welcome. Absolute conservation is another matter entirely, and is generally not applicable to Greenbelt areas. Gatineau Park is more suitable for long-term conservation action.

The NCC has no staff available to do its own examination of areas for detailed conservation action. The OFNC can assist the NCC by providing information on localities to be considered for conservation. Such localities might include individual plant colonies, woods, shrub areas, grassland, marsh, and rock outcrops. Protection of a variety of sites of adequate size will automatically provide habitats suitable for birds and other wildlife, and for the enjoyment of people who do not like the whole landscape manicured. At least a part of our area should be free from the cutting of underbrush which is too generally done in parkland.

Two general methods of collaborating with the NCC are suggested :

1. The exact location of plant colonies or communities which might be preserved should be reported to the NCC, whenever such a colony is found by one of our members.

2. The NCC should notify the OFNC of proposed construction, clearing or other destructive activity in time for a site survey by OFNC members to be reported to NCC before plans are too firm to be adjusted.

The OFNC group which has been carrying out a location survey of wild orchids will supply NCC with a listing of sites and marked map sheets showing those colonies now known in the Greenbelt and Gatineau Park, and will add to the listings any new colonies discovered in future. This action will be supplemented by trips to the sites in company with NCC representatives when required. Where the NCC must destroy the site, any plants capable of being transplanted will be moved to safer locations.

One specific action has already been taken. The proposed camp site on the Corkstown Road includes the largest colony of Pink Ladyslipper (Cyprepedium acaule) near Ottawa. The NCC and the City of Ottawa arranged to introduce us to the landscape architect who is planning the site, and OFNC representatives visited the area with the architect to point out the orchid colony. Plans will be arranged to minimize risk to the plants. While it is still not certain that the camp site will be developed, we have established an action pattern and the necessary contacts with local government have been made.

It is hoped that this action will provide a model for preserving not just the orchids, but any other plant species or natural sites which should be conserved. To this end, OFNC members are asked to report to me any such locations in the Greenbelt or Gatineau Park. Write to Mr. E.W. Greenwood, Ramsayville, Ontario; or phone 822-2587. The matter will be brought to the attention of the Sites committee for further action.

Bird Notes

A BLACK x MALLARD HYBRID DUCK IN OTTAWA

Dan Brunton

On April 12, 1967, I observed a Black x Mallard hybrid duck at the Britannia Filtration Plant pond, in the west end of Ottawa. When first seen it was in the company of a Black Duck.

The hybrid was seen well from close range and under excellent observing conditions. Basically it was like a Black Duck, but had several modifications: a chestnut-coloured breast and black rump (as with a Mallard), a yellow bill and an iridescent green cap, extending down to its nape. In flight it exhibited the typical purple speculum and lack of wing-bars of a Black Duck.

The bird was abnormally tame and was very hard to put to flight. It may be that it inherited this and other harmful traits from its unnatural combination of parents.

It stayed at Britannia at least three weeks, being seen as late as May 4th, when it was observed by Joe Dafoe, thus affording an excellent opportunity to study this interesting bird.

FIRST RECORD FOR SUMMER TANAGER IN OTTAWA

Dan Brunton

At approximately 2.30 p.m. on May 24, 1967, I observed a Summer Tanager (Piranga rubra), in a small wood on the corner of Henley and Alpine Streets in the west end of Ottawa. The bird was a male, giving the impression of being completely red. Close examination showed brownish coloration on the wings (especially the primaries), and tail. The colour appeared a compromise between that of a Scarlet Tanager and a Red Crossbill. The bill was clearly large and pale.

Mr. W.E. Godfrey, ("The Birds of Canada") confirmed the sighting for me at approximately 3.30 p.m. that same day. Two other OFNC members, Ron Pittaway and Monty Brigham also saw it, as well as 10 other interested persons.

The nearest records for the Summer Tanager to Ottawa are Toronto and Hamilton, although a 100-year-old record (hypothetical) does exist for Montreal. It is definitely an Accidental record here.

I planned to photograph the bird the next morning for the sake of any skeptics (although if you don't trust W.E. Godfrey, who can you trust!) but was unable to locate it from 6.30 a.m. to 8.00 a.m. Photographing this bird would have been an easy matter since it was exceedingly tame. Monty Brigham and Mr. Fred Bourguinon did find it however, at 9.00 a.m. Bourguinon shot it and it is now in his collection on Hare Avenue.

Let's look at

G A T I N E A U P A R K

The Black Bears of Gatineau Park are rather shy. You seldom see one, but you will come across their footprints in the sand of the old logging roads, or in the mud along stream banks, or even in deep snow in early spring. The hind foot of a bear makes a track like that of a man's bare foot, but the big toe is on the wrong side. The front foot leaves a broad paw mark.

Almost everywhere you go in the Park, there are signs that bears have been there too. You will find bear droppings along the trails, old stumps clawed to shreds in the search for insects, saplings that have been straddled and broken, broad tramplings through the berry patches. In grassy fields, bears will sometimes overturn clumps of sod here and there, apparently finding something tasty under the sod.

The beechwood areas of the Park are interesting for their 'bear trees'. Bears climb the trees to get beechnuts, and a permanent record of each climb is left on the smooth gray bark. A five-claw scar shows every step that was taken. Even the slips and skids are written into the record.

If you happen to spot a brushpile in the topmost branches of a big black cherry tree, you have found yet another kind of bear tree. The bear climbs the tree for cherries, but as the smaller branches will not support his weight, he draws them in to him and breaks them off, then stacks the brush neatly in the treetop.

What if you meet a bear? The answer to this favourite question is that you don't meet a bear if the bear can help it. You may glimpse a bear, or even have the luck to watch one until he gets wind of you and disappears. But only once have we actually met a bear. We admit, in fairness to the bear, that the meeting took place on a beaver dam where he could not easily turn aside and avoid the confrontation. So now we know what you do (although it may not be what you ought to do) when you meet a bear. You run, faster than you ever knew you could. But you are no match for a bear in a hurry. At top bear speed, he fairly gallops ..... in the opposite direction !

Sheila Thomson

M I L K W E E D

Mary I. Moore
Deep River, Ontario

The Government of Ontario says that the common milkweed (Asclepias syriaca) is a noxious weed. By the time they have sprayed it with a cyanide solution as they do in Deep River, milkweed is definitely noxious. But growing unmolested in an old pasture or roadside, it is an excellent vegetable, one that may well follow the ostrich fern fiddlehead into the gourmet market.

First of all, a warning -- before eating any wild food, be absolutely certain you know what you have. In the case of milkweed there are other less pleasant plants with a milky juice.

We first use milkweed in June when the young shoots are 3 - 5 inches high with the leaves still appressed. We break the stems off close to the ground, trim the larger leaves, wash, and pop them into boiling water for 10 - 15 minutes until tender. Some recommend that milkweed be cooked in two lots of water, for there are records of very young children becoming ill from eating the raw plant, but I found boiling in enough water to cover is satisfactory. The shoots taste like a cross between asparagus and young beans and are, of course, excellent served like asparagus, with a Hollandaise sauce.

The flower buds were used by the Indians in soups and stews, and make an unusual vegetable when cooked in the same way as shoots. But if you want a real conversation stopper, cook the half grown pods; the silk and the seeds cannot be distinguished as such but the texture contrasts in an interesting way with the outer pod. I freeze a few packages of shoots and pods each year to brighten up a winter dinner party.

There is an unverified report of an eighteenth century traveller who wrote "The French in Canada make a sugar of the flowers, which for the purpose are gathered in the morning when they are covered all over with dew. This dew is expressed and by boiling yields a very good, brown, palatable sugar." I didn't like to destroy so many beautiful flowers but I did think it might be possible to make a wine from them - and it was. The wine (and the vinegar into which one of the small batches turned) was a beautiful dark rose in colour. I tried a simple recipe of the type used for dandelion wine and made samples with both the natural and a bread yeast.

Another use is mentioned by Champlain. The North American Indians used hooks of bone and wood to which were attached lines of 'hemp'. This was translated as being swamp milkweed (although it may have been dogbane) but the fresh fibres in the stem of common milkweed are fairly strong and could have been twisted together to make a thread.

Then there is Asclepias chewing gum. The milk actually turns to rubber on the hand in a few minutes and there is no bitter flavour -- if you have washed your hands! A visitor said he had used the milk to seal envelopes, and from this we wondered if a cloth saturated in the milk would patch a canoe.

If the Government officials who coldly include our milkweed in the official weed list knew how useful it is, perhaps they would look upon the plant with affection instead of displeasure. Milkweed lovers, rise to its defense!

* * *

ATTRACTING BIRDS : If you have been successful in keeping birds near your home in winter, we would like to know about your methods. Phone or write to one of the editors before 1 August. We hope to publish some information about feeding - how to make, where to place feeders, and what foods appeal to the species we wish to attract. Tell us how to deal with squirrels.

OF BOTANICAL INTEREST .....

Club members with an eye for the plants of our area will be pleased to know of a report now available "FLORISTIC INVENTORY OF MONT STE MARIE, Gatineau County, Quebec", by William G. Dore. It gives an account of a botanical survey made in 1966 on Mont Ste Marie, a landmark to the east of Lac Ste Marie rising to 1830 feet, the highest peak in the Gatineau Hills. It has a vegetative cover typical of this section of the Precambrian Shield, in a relatively natural state.

A project to install a radar tower on the summit was abandoned after a road had been built to the top giving access to a wild natural area. This survey records the species found and their relative abundance at the present time. The introductory pages describe general features of the terrain, a brief history of the vegetation, patterns of human use and settlement, and forest types now growing. An aerial photo of the survey area is given, with a map showing collecting sites. A dozen photos show some striking aspects of the region.

Two thousand acres including the summit and slopes to the west and north are now owned by a company which will develop them, first as a ski resort, later for year-round use. Inevitable changes in the flora can be compared in future with the results of this 1966 inventory, which includes valuable comments on changes already taking place. A visit to the area this season would provide a fascinating look at plant succession - take this book along as guide.

... A. H.

Obtain your copy from Dr. Dore : 992-5620
or write : Plant Research Institute
Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa

* * *

The Excursions & Lectures Committee of the OFNC hopes to arrange a field trip to Mont Ste Marie in the autumn, with Dr. Dore as leader. Details will be published in the September - October issue.

BIG TREE SURVEY

"Gosh, that's a big tree! It's a white pine, isn't it? Do you suppose there are any other white pines as big as that anywhere else around Ottawa?"

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to answer that question, not only for white pines, but for all our native trees? We propose to make measurements of the largest trees of each species that we can find, and to publish the results from time to time in TRAIL & LANDSCAPE. Of course we will need lots of help locating trees to measure since there are eleven conifers and forty-three broad-leaved species in our area (we are excluding willows and hawthorns for now as being too difficult to identify). If you know of a big tree please tell us the kind of tree, the circumference at $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the ground, and its exact location so that we may find it to make the other measurements. If the tree is on private property, tell us the name of the owner if possible.

To decide whether a short fat tree is 'bigger' than a tall skinny tree, we plan to use the 'bigness formula' of the American Forestry Association. To illustrate how it works we will describe the measurements of the current champion eastern cottonwood (Populus deltoides) which was nominated by Dr. W.G. Dore. The circumference at $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the ground was 162 inches. The height, determined trigonometrically with a sextant, was 97 feet. The average crown diameter was about 60 feet. The 'bigness' is obtained by adding the first two numbers to one-quarter of the third, giving in this case a result of 274.

This is the only tree we have measured so far, and so the field is wide open. Don't overlook a blue-beech or ironwood of 30-inch circumference - that's about as big as they get. Send your entries to

Harry Thomson 234-0845 or
Gary Hanes 749-2400

MEMBERS' EXCHANGE

HELP WANTED : Officers of the Club receive requests for a naturalist (non-expert!) to go on outings of groups such as camera club, Macoun Club, Scouts etc. to help their members learn a bit about plants, birds and nature. These would be single occasions not involving further commitment. Any OFNC member willing to give service please phone Sheila Thomson 234-0845.

NATURE PHOTOS AT EXPO : Club member Jeanne White has 25 photos on display in the Canadian Pavilion at Expo. She tells us they are "across the lagoon with ducks, on the north side of the building." The two boys shown (one with dip-net, one with rabbit) are members of the Macoun Field Club on one of their excursions.

NEST RECORDS SCHEME : We think T & L readers would be interested to know how the NRS has progressed in our area. Will users of the Nest Records cards please send us a note to say how many cards have been submitted, and for which species? If enough replies come in, a report will be published in a later issue.

SPOT UNUSUAL PLANTS : This season I am undertaking to make a floristic survey of Gatineau Park with the object of writing a Flora. My immediate goal is to make a complete inventory of the species in the Park. I would appreciate receiving records of exact localities within the Park boundary from any Club members or interested persons.

John M. Gillett
Plant Research Institute
C. E. F., Ottawa

TAKE A BREAK FROM EXPO-WATCHING : Get yourself a copy of "Birding in the Montreal Area", compiled by The Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds. This attractive pamphlet will lead you to the best birding spots around Montreal. It includes maps and useful descriptions. Available from Mr. M. Spencer, 59 Eastbourne, Beaconsfield, P.Q.

COMING EVENTS

Sat. July 15: Insects. A field trip for beginners, to Black Lake in Gatineau Park. Meet at Health & Welfare Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, at 10 a.m. Bring a lunch. Leader: Fenja Brodo (224-7077)

Sat. July 29: Club Mosses, Horsetails and Ferns. A morning outing to points south of Ottawa. Meet at the R.A. Centre parking lot, Riverside Drive, at 9.30 a.m. Leader: Bill Illman (733-6208)

Sat. Aug. 5: Shore Birds. A morning outing to Ottawa River beaches. Meet at Health & Welfare Bldg., at 8 a.m. Leaders: Monty Brigham (722-0855) and Ron Pittaway (684-5719)

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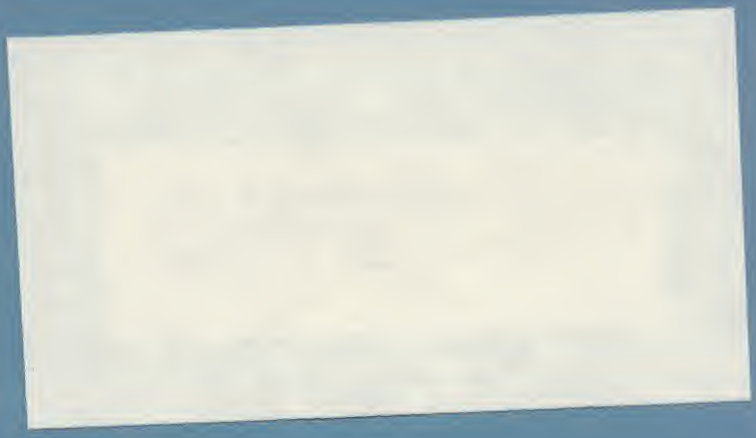
CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST : The influx of new members has depleted our reserve stock of the January-March 1967 number of the C F-N. Members who do not wish to keep their copies are asked to send them to W.J. Cody, Business Manager, OFNC, Plant Research Institute, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.